CLASSIFICATION OFFICE DECISION

Title of publication:	The Cannabis Encyclopedia
Other known title(s):	Not stated
OFLC ref:	1700420.000
Medium:	Book
Author:	Jorge Cervantes
Publisher:	Van Patten Publishing
Country of origin:	United States
Language:	English
Applicant:	Mike Coory
Classification:	Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 18 years.
Descriptive note:	None
Display conditions:	When the book is on public display, the classification given to the book must be shown by way of a label issued in accordance with a direction under s36(A)(2) of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993.
Date of entry in Register:	31 August 2017
Date of direction to issue a label:	No direction to issue a label has been issued
Date of notice of decision:	31 August 2017

Summary of reasons for decision:

This book was submitted for classification by a member of the public after it was seized by the New Zealand Customs Service on the grounds that it is objectionable under s3(3)(d) of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 because of the extent and degree to which, and the manner in which, it promotes and encourages criminal acts. This particular book has been imported for the purpose of applying for a license to legally grow medicinal cannabis. It is of course possible that this book could have wider use than that. While there are passages which would aid growers to avoid detection these are only a small portion of a technical volume focused on the cultivation of medicinal cannabis in countries where its use is legal. The book cannot fairly be said to promote or encourage criminal acts to a degree that would necessitate an objectionable classification in order to prevent injury to the public good. In terms of the effect on younger readers, there are also passages which may prove enticing to impressionable teenagers in particular, who may be inspired to experiment with or cultivate cannabis with little or no understanding of the legal consequences of their actions or the effect of the drug on their developing brains. While younger readers in New Zealand may not be

aware of the legal status or current debate around cannabis, adults can be expected to have the maturity and life experience to understand the consequences should they choose to break the law. The risk of injury to the public good if the book is available to adults is therefore low. Given these factors it would be an unreasonable limitation on the right to freedom of expression as affirmed by the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 to classify the book as objectionable, or to even to make it available only to a specific class of readers, such as persons who are licensed or permitted to cultivate cannabis. A restriction to adults is sufficient to prevent injury to the public good, and is a reasonable and justifiable limitation on the right to freedom of expression.